

Diagnostic Of My Language Teaching Context

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This document provides a diagnostic of the teaching context by describing the learners characteristics, the setting, and the syllabus.

In regards to my teaching context, we must begin with the setting, pointing that the **role of English in the country**, it is primarily a subject taught in the school curriculum, (as cited in the anthology, p.5). Thus, it is best described in the words of Tsui (1995) "EFL term refers to the status of English society where it is only taught as a subject in the classroom, and it is not used as a medium of communication in education, business or government.". Some of **the teachers** of other subjects may know a little of English, or know how to communicate in English. Although, some of them may not speak with fluency, so, they avoid speak the L2, while others do not speak English unless they are requested to speak outside students' classrooms, because their mother tongue is Spanish. The people on **management and administration**, do not speak fluently in English, or there are others who do not know how to speak English, sometimes they listen to the radio where there are songs and few commercials on English but they do not understand what are they saying or singing. The school library has poor **resources available** in English, they have some textbooks that have been donated, they do not have encyclopedias or books to read for pleasure or magazines that are written in English. Perhaps, they may have few programs on cds or DVDs with movies that are English spoken which have subtitles. Although, the high school has a Computer Laboratory where it is possible to use internet, in which adult people in management, administration, and teachers can find the resources to access anything in English or any other language. However, internet access is limited to students, because they can not access to some pages. Internet is used for learning purposes inside this room only. Teachers may have access on their classes to pages that students may not, outside their class schedules. **Support Personnel**, even though they do not speak English we communicate in our mother tongue, Spanish. Computer's lab is available to all teachers. If we must use the classroom for teaching purposes, then we must schedule our entrance and access to the internet. If we must use online pages during our class, we should request its' access to all students in our class.

The number of pupils or the size of the classes depend on the schedule given to each teacher at the beginning of the semester. **Time available for the program.** There are terms where groups are on their first, third and fifth level to both shifts, morning and evening. Otherwise, other terms are second, and fourth level's to both shifts, morning and evenings well. This means that from first to fourth levels the groups have three classes of English per week, and, just to fifth levels, their English classes are five days every week. Every class is fifty minutes long for the entire student body.

Physical environment. This high school campus has a total of five buildings and a small cafeteria, where the tallest building is three stories, other four are one. In the tallest building, it has a lot of echo inside its rooms. It is made on concrete blocks. Every room has a total of five windows and its entrance or exit door. It is possible to seat no more than sixty people with its own desk plus the teacher table and chair. There are no rugs or carpets in there, as the windows do not have curtains either. To put curtains there were terms where there was a teacher in charge of the room, and this teacher placed curtains to every window with students' help. Each room has a projector and an air conditioner item, in which a teacher is in charge of their controls. Otherwise the projector has a main control that is under the lock of the computer's lab, and the air conditioner control is under the administration's office lock.

The socio-cultural environment is characterized by teachers according to technical specialties in the high school community. What I am saying is that there are two technical careers in this high school: Hotel Services Technician and Business Management Technician. Methods and materials are to suit those two technical careers only.

The type of tests used in this high school campus, every teacher makes its own tests in regards to the topics that were seen during the month evaluated. At the beginning of the semester, every group must negotiate with their teachers the evaluation criteria that will be followed during the semester, or monthly. Some times students and teachers negotiate how will they make evaluations every month, and they set what percentage will have on each item. There are occasions where tests are set in the academy of the subject every term, or there are other times when tests are free to be made or apply in each subject.

Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the language program itself. This kind of evaluation is imposed by the main office after teachers have participated in classroom observations. However, there is a regional academy of seniors language teacher on each campus, where teachers make agreements to be followed during each term. Every senior teacher who is in charge of the academy at every high school campus, and who has participated in the regional academy shares with all other teacher the agreements to be followed.

Secondly, in regards to learner characteristics, it is possible to consider **learner's age** depending on the teaching term. For example, on the term 20-01 that I had four groups of second semester, and a group in fourth semester. Back then, learners on second level were 14 to 16 years of age, and fourth level' students were 15 to 17 years of age. **Interests** some learners on second level do not like sports, most of them do not like sports or to go to school, students love social media, few of them liked to play basket ball and soccer, some of them like video games, and to play cards, a few of them like to play chess, Learners also enjoyed watching soap operas. Few of them liked to read at home. Meanwhile, learners in fourth level enjoy all kinds of sports, such as extreme sports, learners are looking for a half time job, they help their parents at home with their little brothers and sisters. They enjoy participating in dancing classes and theater classes, or they liked to sing. They are more extroverted young people. **Aptitude.** From 2010 to 2016 it was during classes that learners showed their aptitudes towards English. However, in 2016, according to ACTFL's home page, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages is "a national organization dedicated to the improvement and expansion of the teaching and learning of all languages at all levels of instruction throughout the U.S.". There are five levels of proficiency: novice, intermediate, advanced, superior, and distinguished. However, the novice, intermediate and advanced levels are broken up into low, mid, and high. In which, it helped to identified strengths and areas of opportunity that my learners have with their four skills towards their levels of proficiency in English. However, it was not enough for my teaching practice.

Level of Proficiency in English. So, by 2017-1 it was a must that on the first week of the beginning of the semester, my groups of students were taken to the computer's lab to make a diagnostic assessment (see appendix 1), allowing their teacher to find out student's level of English, in this way, we could know how many learners from each group are beginners or A1, A2 elementary, B1 intermediate, B2 upper intermediate or C1 advanced according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) Levels. **Mother tongue.** Most of the students that we have received in Cecyte Campus Ejido Puebla are not bilingual, which means that their mother tongue is Spanish. There is a tiny amount of learners who have shown that they are bilinguals by the time they get into their high school with us. **Academic and educational level.** In the Cecyte community, all learners from first to fourth level they are taught by topics, different topics on each level, except to fifth levels who repeat some topics that they had seen in lower levels, focusing on those topics that they may need when they make their evaluation test, in order to get into the university program. **Attitudes to learning.** Most of their attitudes towards learning a English as a second language on their high school at Ejido Puebla Campus has been particularly interesting for the most part of the business management technicians, although to hotel services technicians it has been more difficult to learn. **Motivation and reasons for learning.** Studies have shown that sixty percent of the students in their first year of high school at our campus have the idea that they have to attend because their parents take them to. Only 40% of the learners attend to high school having in mind that they want to keep studying after high school or they want to get a job. **Preferred learning styles and Personality.** There are staff meetings in which the principal, academics working together with the guidance department, teachers of all areas and subjects are involved, these kind of information is shared there. In those meetings we analyse every single student from every group, from both shifts, morning and evening. Also, there are times when students are asked on the kind of activities they enjoy the most on their first weeks in English classes, and, in Spanish when they get into high school a week or two weeks behind. There are special cases that are only seen in the guidance department.

Lastly, we must pay close attention to the syllabus. Regarding to the groups that are given to me every term at the public high school where I teach, it is relevant to identify how many students will belong to every group, in both shifts, morning and evening. After we have the learners' results to their levels of proficiency in English, because with this information it is possible to work with learners in the computer's lab and inside classrooms as well.

There are rare occasions where young learners are required to buy a textbook to use in their English Class. It is habitual not to use a textbook. On the other hand, it is quite normal to use Functional-Notional syllabus with learners on first and third levels on their second evaluation. However, it has been applied situational syllabus according to the features mentioned in the anthology (p.8) to fourth levels of their first evaluation. The Topic-Based syllabus has been applied to the fourth levels on their second evaluation, and finally, to fifth levels a process syllabus has been applied.

Appendix (1):

A) Computer Lab Seats of 4 Students

Seats

Group Seats 4

B) Take a Quiz to find out young Students' Level of English

LearnEnglish Teens



Step 1 - Take our free online English level test

Find out your English level

Take our free online English test!

Click **START** to begin the test and answer each of the 25 questions carefully. After each question indicate how sure you are of your answer (Certain, Fairly sure, Not sure).

When you finish the test, you will be told your approximate English level. You can then search for suitable content on LearnEnglish Teens by level. You can also search for content by topic.

START



This test is designed for personal use to give you an approximate indication of your English level. Contact your local British Council office if you would like to take a formal test of English.

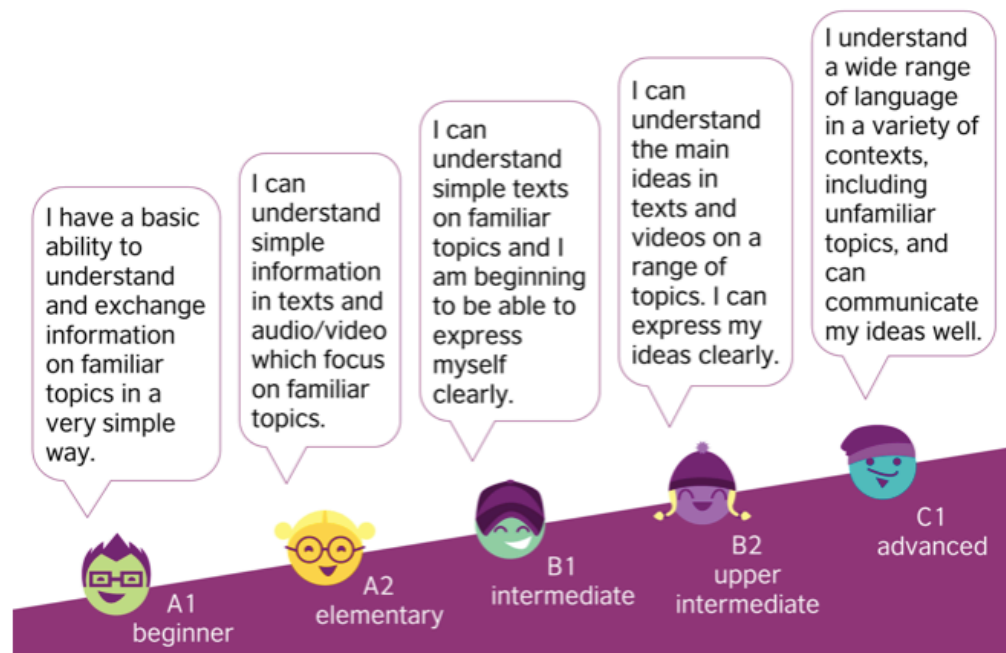
Appendix (1):

CEF levels

LearnEnglish Teens offers English language practice for a wide range of language levels, from beginners to advanced. We use the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)** to indicate the levels of our resources.

The CEFR was created by the Council of Europe and can be used with all European languages, not just English. It is very useful to know your level of English so you can choose the material on our website that is suitable for you and that will help you to improve.

To find content on our website that will be suitable for your level of English use our **Content** page. You can search by level as well as by topics that you are interested in.



C) Diagnostic Assessment

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References

- CEF Levels (n.d.) (<https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-levels>)
- Tsui, A. (1995) *Introducing Classroom Interaction*. London: Penguin English Applied Linguistics.
- Universidad IEXPRO (n.d.) *Materials and Resources in EFL*
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